

**PUBLIC CHAPTER NO. 1157**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 3297**

**By Representatives Vaughn, Crider, Odom, Gilmore, Cooper,  
McDaniel, Richardson, Armstrong, Tindell**

**Substituted for: Senate Bill No. 3126**

**By Senators Burchett, Marrero, Jackson, Harper, Burks, Ford, Black**

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 33, relative to mental retardation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

WHEREAS, There are over six thousand (6,000) Tennesseans waiting for services through the division of mental retardation services;

WHEREAS, The division of mental retardation services is currently only enrolling up to fifty (50) people into service per month from the division's waiting list;

WHEREAS, The division of mental retardation services is currently adding up to ninety-five (95) people per month to its waiting list;

WHEREAS, The division of mental retardation services waiting list is growing beyond the rate of people being provided services and many Tennesseans with mental retardation are vulnerable and at risk of serious health and safety issues; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. There is hereby created a special joint committee to study the issues relating to services provided to persons with developmental disabilities, mental retardation, and other disabilities. This study shall include but not be limited to:

(1) A review of the different agencies in state government providing services;

(2) The structure and location of state services to persons with developmental disabilities, mental retardation, and other disabilities;

(3) The efficiency of providing services to persons with disabilities and costs associated with providing services;

(4) To evaluate the cost of the division of mental retardation services (DMRS) waiting list and the means to reduce and/or eliminate it; and

(5) To look at the cost structure of services in DMRS and evaluate differences in cost.

SECTION 2. The special joint committee shall consist of:

(1) Four (4) members of the senate, to be appointed by the speaker of the senate; and

(2) Four (4) members of the house, to be appointed by the speaker of the house.

SECTION 3. All appropriate agencies of state government shall provide assistance to the special joint committee upon request of the chair.

SECTION 4. All legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the general assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its final findings and recommendations.

SECTION 5. The special joint committee shall be convened by the member having the greatest number of years of continuous service within the general assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect from among its legislative membership a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

SECTION 6. The special joint committee shall timely report its final findings and recommendations to the One Hundred Sixth General Assembly no later than February 1, 2010.

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect upon becoming law, the public welfare requiring it.

**PASSED: May 21, 2008**

  
JIMMY NAIFEH, SPEAKER  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

  
RON RAMSEY, SPEAKER  
SENATE OF THE SENATE

APPROVED this 13th day of June 2008



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PHIL BREDESEN, GOVERNOR